

BIRMINGHAM AREA CABLE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 21, 2015

Present: Heldt, McAlear – Birmingham
 Stakhiv – Franklin
 Ettenson – Bingham Farms
 Borgon, Heyman, Verdi-Hus – Beverly Hills

Absent: Schneider – Beverly Hills
 McLain - Birmingham

Also Present: White – Executive Director
 Currier – Attorney for Cable Board
 Gary M. Gemmell, IT Manager for the City of Birmingham
 Rota – Bloomfield Community Television
 Galbraith – Birmingham Schools representative

Heldt called the meeting to order at 7:48 AM in the Birmingham Public Schools' Education & Administration Center, Evergreen Room, 31301 Evergreen Road, Beverly Hills, MI.

Motion by Ettenson, seconded by McAlear to amend the agenda to delete item 6: **PURCHASE UNIFORMS/ PONCHOS FOR BCTV STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.**

Motion passed.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD September 16, 2015

Motion by Ettenson, seconded by Heyman to approve the minutes of the Regular Cable Board Meeting on September 16, 2015.

Motion passed.

PEG GRANT REQUEST – CITY OF BIRMINGHAM FOR FINAL PHASE OF MUSEUM CONNECTIVITY ENHANCEMENT

Gary M. Gemmell, IT Manager for the City of Birmingham, presented the request from the City of Birmingham for a grant in an amount of \$19,431.77 for the expansion of wireless services as the final phase of the Historical Museum & Park connectivity enhancements. The site is unique in that there is a spring-fed pool and a steep slope. Thus, a pole mounted access point would greatly improve service from the most desirable park area at the Birmingham Museum and Park, which is between the north side of the pool and Willets St. Netech was the low bidder on the project and has been the City vendor for other City wireless projects. The company is familiar with the City's networking infrastructure.

Heldt inquired about the Museum's exact location and available parking. Gemmell responded that it is on Maple Road at the point where Southfield Road comes to a dead end and there is parking at the entrance of the museum.

Motion by Borgon, seconded by Heyman to approve the grant in an amount not to exceed \$19,431.77 to the City of Birmingham for the expansion of wireless services as the Final Phase of Museum & Park connectivity enhancements.

Borgon noted that this project has been discussed at past meetings and this would be the final phase of the upgrade to complete the project. Heldt inquired about a timeline for its completion assuming its approval. Gemmell stated that the next step would be to seek permission from the City Commission to spend said funds.

Roll Call Vote:

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Motion passed. (7-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer Heldt did not have the financials from MBS as of 9/30/2015, but would provide that information at the November 2015 Board meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

White stated that there was no meeting in October but she had a phone discussion with McLain about items which were scheduled to be on the agenda. 1) Audit - The auditors had all the information they needed and were moving forward. She anticipated that it would be on the November agenda. 2) Proposal – Discussion about on-line questions/comments from the public with an answer/discussion session at the end of the Board meetings. Stakhiv stated that she supported the idea of receiving questions from the public but was hesitant about receiving them online during the meeting. She thought it more appropriate if they were sent at least a day before the meeting so they could be discussed at the meeting. White said that this issue would be put on the agenda for the November 5 Cable Action Committee meeting which would be at the Baldwin Public Library at 6 P.M. 3) New Survey – Is it time for a new one? This too would be put on the next Cable Action Committee agenda.

Referring to the discussion about online questions/comments, Heldt observed that customarily no Board Member is online during a meeting, but it might be possible for anyone to choose to do so in order to receive the online inquiries. This method could be doable even though it is not the customary practice of how the meetings are conducted. Borgon stated that the Cable Board had access to a compact computer and suggested that the Executive Director might screen the questions for the benefit of the Board. He supported having this subject put on the next Cable Action Committee agenda for further discussion. He is also in favor of the committee discussing the idea of a new survey.

Attorney Tim Currier voiced his concerns with on-line questions with respect to the Open Meetings Act. He advised the Board to move cautiously with this matter. There were many opinions, case laws, and some pending legislation regarding Board Members, their electronic communications and absentee voting. But as of yet, there was nothing involving the public and its electronic communications, and how to deal with the submitted questions. Borgon asked that Currier come to the next Board meeting with some guidance. Ettenson mentioned the utilization of social media to which Currier replied that, as of now, there were no case laws, statutes or Attorney Generals’ opinions addressing such issues. Currier added that the Open Meeting Act requires that all deliberations and decisions have to be made at an open meeting and the public has a right to participate. His first impression was that with regards to “screening questions”, all questions should be put on the record. If they are answered or not is another question.

PEG Committee

McAlear had nothing to report at this time.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

White outlined five (5) complaints that were received since the last Board meeting: two (2) were resolved however, the Cable Board may be filing an additional complaint on behalf of a resident who is now experiencing different problems with her Comcast service, and three (3) are pending, one being a billing issue.

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Financial information for the account balance for the MBS, BBCU, and Beverly Hills accounts were provided via hard copies at the meeting in addition to being emailed to all members. Since her last report White has written six (6) checks on behalf of BACB which were listed in her memo, dated October 10, 2015.

White updated the Board that she believed Beverly Hills is hiring a new of Finance Director. In the meantime BACB and Beverly Hills are working together with the financials.

Additional notes included a report from the National Digital Inclusion Alliance stating that Detroit was among the worst connected U.S. cities having a population of 50,000 or greater. The report indicated that 37.8% of Detroit households have no internet access and Detroit was ranked as the second worst connected city of the 25 cities listed. With respect to the AT&T-DirecTV merger, AT&T had the most subscribers (26.3 million), followed by Comcast (22.3 million) and Charter-Time Warner-Bright House was third (17.2 million). She noted that the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) and the Alliance for Communications Democracy (ACD) have asked the FCC to deny the merger of Charter Communications, Time Warner Cable and Bright House Networks citing Charter's lack of attention to PEG Access channels as the key reason. The final item was about a new index, referred to as "AMOV", that measured the average minutes of viewing by U.S. adults on each video platform. It stated that U.S. Pay-TV viewing was 13X greater than Netflix, followed by Pay-TV Guide, YouTube, VideoOnMobile, Roku, and finally, Apple TV. The report provided numbers to support the claim.

Borgon suggested monies be transferred from the Beverly Hills account to the MBS and the Birmingham/Bloomfield Credit Union account. White said that this week a manual transfer of some of the monies was made from Beverly Hills into the Credit Union and she also signed a check request to get a larger portion transferred into the Credit Union. She would be meeting with the Treasurer to discuss transferring funds into MBS. Borgon asked Currier for an explanation of MBS minimal balance procedures.

White requested that Board Members alert her to any subject matter of particular interest to them so she could follow up on press reports, etc.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

a. Comcast

There was no representative present. Ettenson relayed some favorable comments about Fred Eaton and Michele Plummer, who oversees the Customer Service.

b. AT&T/Uverse/Direct TV

There was no representative present.

c. WOW

There was no representative present. Ettenson inquired if the representative had followed up with an email to White about extending service to Franklin and Bingham Farms as he proposed at the September Board Meeting. White will follow up.

BAPA/BAMA REPORT

Steve Rota referred to his memo to BACB, dated 10/14/15 and pointed out the 8 completed **BAMA** Programs were regularly scheduled municipal meetings: Multi-Modal Transportation Board meeting, Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, Board of Ethics Meeting, Two Baldwin Library Board Meetings, and the BACB meeting.

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For the **BAPA** Programs, from the BACB area individual producers and organizations they taped 26 programs. He listed all the programs, adding that the final covered sports game for the fall season would be a Volleyball game at Groves on October 22. Hopefully, by the November meeting the Winter sports schedule dates would be available.

The next Volunteer Producer Workshop at the studio has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 27, 2015 from 10AM to Noon or 6:30PM to 8:30PM. Call 248-433-7790 and sign up. If those time slots are not convenient a one-on-one session can be scheduled.

He added that on Saturday, October 3 a Boys' soccer game was scheduled. Unfortunately it was a very windy day and one of the two (2) cameras mounted on the press box was knocked over, cracking the lens casing. He is in the process of researching the cost of a new one and will bring that information back to the Board at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

Borgon thanked the Birmingham Public Schools for allowing the Cable Board to use the facility. He had compliments about the center and praised Mr. Heldt for his leadership in the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 AM.